

Fourth and Fifth Grade FAQs For Interested Parents of Regular School Students Who Wish to Take Accelerated Courses

1. Can elementary students take middle school virtual courses?

The passage of House Bill 7197 by the Florida Legislature created a state law requiring elementary principals to notify parents of students scoring 4 or 5 on FCAT Reading or Math of this opportunity.

2. Am I required to place my child in a virtual class?

No, the requirement is for the school to notify you of this opportunity. Your child will not be placed in a virtual course without your permission. In addition, the school administration must determine that acceleration is academically appropriate.

3. Why must the administration determine that it is academically appropriate to accelerate my child?

If your child is placed in a virtual class, then he/she will not be enrolled in the same subject area, grade-level course. As an example, consider a 5th grader who scored a level 4 or 5 on FCAT Math. The FCAT test identifies this student as a potential candidate for acceleration because he/she performed above grade level in 4th grade math standards. Before determining that this 5th grader should be placed in 6th grade math we must also determine that he/she has mastered the 5th grade math standards. If accelerated, this student would never receive direct instruction in the 5th grade standards, and success in math is dependent on mastering the standards at each grade level. Therefore, the school must be certain that the student has achieved mastery at the previous grade level (FCAT) as well as in any grade level content that would be missed as a result of acceleration.

4. My child is a 4th grader. Can I request acceleration into 5th grade virtual classes?

No, virtual classes are available at the 6th, 7th and 8th grade levels only. We do not have an option for 5th grade level courses through this program.

5. If my child participates in this program, who will be the teacher?

If your student takes a course through Pasco eSchool, then the teacher will be employed by the District School Board of Pasco County and is available locally when needed. If taking a Florida Virtual School course, then the teacher is employed by Florida Virtual School. Regardless of the employer, each teacher will be state-certified and fingerprinted, and background checks have been completed.

6. How will my child communicate with the teacher?

Students and parents will communicate regularly with the teacher primarily through email and phone. Pasco eSchool teachers are also available to meet with students or parents in person upon request.

7. Will my child be able to accomplish all coursework at school?

Probably not. Most Middle school courses require a significant amount of time and "homework" that the student will need to accomplish to remain on pace in the course.

8. What FCAT test will my student take if he/she is enrolled in an accelerated course?

Your student will take the FCAT tests that are required for his/her grade level. Although your student may be enrolled in a course for a higher grade level, he/she is still classified as a 4th or 5th grader and therefore will take all of the FCAT assessments for the assigned grade level.

9. I see that courses are available through Florida Virtual School (FLVS) or Pasco eSchool, what is the difference?

Pasco eSchool is a franchise of FLVS. All of the courses will be same regardless of your choice of FLVS or Pasco eSchool. The significant differences are with the instructor and school calendar. Pasco eSchool teachers are employed by the District School Board of Pasco County and coursework must be completed by the last day of school. If a student has not completed a Pasco eSchool course by the last day of school, they will not pass the course. Florida Virtual courses are taught by teachers employed by FLVS (who have a Florida teaching certificate, but may be located anywhere in the country), and courses run throughout the entire calendar year.

10. I have been approved to register my student for a course, how do I sign up for the course?

Contact your elementary school Guidance Counselor at your bricks and mortar school.

11. How will promotion be impacted by enrollment in an accelerated course?

The school must consider your child's performance in the online course(s) to determine promotion. Failure to complete a course or to receive a passing grade may have an impact on your student's promotion.